4: Hobley G-5 (ca. 1900) 1902 FL11 Luo FL11

CHAPTER III.

Nilotic Tribes of Kavirondo.

101 The generic name used of these peoples by themselves is Ja-Luo. The Bantu Kavirondo people call them Awa-Nyoro. A very common term for them is Wa-Nife.

231 241 361 *Modes of subsistence.*—They all live by agriculture. They reside in fixed villages of from ten to fifty huts. Nearly all the villages are surrounded by euphorbia hedges; formerly many villages had mud and occasionally stone walls, but this custom has died out. They breed cattle, sheep, goats, and fowls.

[224] 226 *Hunting and fishing.*—They dig pitfalls for elephants and also spear elephants. They catch large quantities of fish in the Lake Victoria Nyanza by means of large conical wicker traps "*dema*." The process is as follows:—They have two enormously long ropes; one end of each rope is secured on shore, and the ropes are then paid out into the lake, one rope floats on the surface and from it hangs a fringe of papyrus stalks; the other rope is a ground rope, and is weighted with stones, and the two ropes are connected at intervals. By means of canoes these ropes are gradually brought round in a semi-circle the size of which gradually decreases. The fish rush shorewards to escape from the drawing in of the net, and rush into the mouth of the big wicker traps which are placed in a row in the shallow water near the shore. At the same time the women walk up and down dragging smaller meshed traps in which they collect myriads of tiny fish the size of a sardine. They fish a great deal at night by torchlight. They state that they got the best hauls of fish after rain; in the dry season they catch [824] comparatively few. Rafts of ambatch wood are used for laying out the net (ambatch is a very light spongy wood growing on the lake shore; it has a prickly [439] bark). They split and dry large quantities of fish and carry it inland from the lake for considerable distances to sell for grain.

227 ●501 Lines and hooks are also used to a certain extent by the Nyakach people and others. The people bordering the lake possess a few dug-out canoes and also a few of the sewn canoes bought from Baganda or Basoga.

491 *Bridges.*—They build rough bridges of timber across the rivers when in flood, but not suspension bridges like the North Kavirondo.

264 252 *Cooking, etc.*—They cook in earthen pots inside their huts, and also in the verandah of the huts. All cooking is done by women. The food is served up in little baskets. The father eats with his sons; they generally eat in a little separate hut with open sides built for the purpose. Women eat separately and inside the house.

372 *Fire.*—They know the use of firesticks but rarely need them, as they can always obtain a glowing ember from one or other of their neighbours.

[pp. 11-25 not processed]

papyrus fibre. Small rods made from a tree called Osire are used by children. A dried piece of mtama stalk is used as a float. Nyawino, Nthira, Osoga, and Sire are caught in this way. The bait used is Oniambo or a piece of groundnut. Long lines, Mugondo, with a large number of hooks are sometimes used. These are left in the water for some time with floats at intervals to buoy them up.

FISH USED FOR LOCAL CONSUMPTION.

As most of the fish caught by natives is not eaten fresh, but dried, the whole of the population of these locations could easily eat fish caught on the Lake shore. In fact there is no doubt that dried fish is transported and eaten by the natives very much further inland than these Lake shore locations. The whole Jaluo population of Central and South Kavirondo will eat fish if they can get it. The population is approximately as follows:—

Central Kavirondo	316,000
South Kavirondo (Luo)	180,387

The two Districts which border on the Lake shores in Nyanza Province are Central and South Kavirondo. The natives living close to the shore in both these Districts spend a large part of their time fishing. It has been estimated that about two to three thousand in each District are more or less permanently employed in this work. They use canoes (Dholuo, Yiyi) made of rough boards sewn together with grass fibre and caulked with mud. There are probably about 1,000 canoes in each District (Central and South Kavirondo). They are propelled with single bladed paddles (Ngai).

The following are the names and population of the Locations in these two Districts which actually border on the Lake shore from the Sio River on the Uganda border on the North of the Gulf to Mohuru on the Tanganyika border on the South side:—

CENTRAL KAVIRONDO.

Name of Location.	Population.
Samia	33,000
Kadimu	6,000
Sakwa	18,000
Uyoma	10,000
Asembo	18,000
Seme	26,000
Kisumu	15,000
West Kano	19,000
Nyakach	22,000
	162,000

small fish: two Adel about four inches long, two Sire and one Ningu. We were also shown two small eels (Akunga). When breakfast was finished we walked up to see the big weir across the river. It was about 50 yards from the mouth and stretched from bank to bank in a zig-zag line. It was made of rough poles driven into the sandy bottom of the river which was very sluggish at this point. Numerous gaps had been left in the barrier and above every gap facing down stream was fastened a fish trap (Musathi) of which there were about 30 or 40 in all. By this time numerous natives had collected together and several rafts had been brought down to assist in lifting up the traps. These rafts were of several kinds. One kind consisted of long thin poles of very light ambatch (Dholuo, Mburi) wood fastened together. This wood, when dry, is as light as cork and is used for floats for the Mugondo, or stationary lines, and also by the Mohuru natives for floating their hippopotami harpoons. The second raft was a large square frame about 12 ft. by 5 ft. made of poles fastened together three deep by iron rods. The floor appeared to be made of some sort of matting. This raft, as it appeared to be the safest, we chose to stand on while watching the fish traps being taken up. The raft was tied up to the top side of the weir while two natives went into the water which was up to their shoulders and unfastened the traps one by one. When they were undone the native who was with us on the raft pulled the trap out of the water with the mouth up and the fish that were inside slipped to the end of the cone. When he got it on the raft he turned it the other way up and the fish could then be pulled out where the inner basket was fastened to the outer one at the mouth. The fish were then put into a receptacle of matting work for safe keeping called Ngaha. We watched 20 of these baskets being taken out and the following is a record of the catch in each basket. I was informed that these catches were very very small compared with what is usually taken in the months when fish are plentiful.

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It is noteworthy that only one of the 20 baskets drew a complete blank and in one other both the fish Ngege were dead.

1st trap	1 Mumi	11th trap	5 Ngege
2nd ,, ...	2 Ngege	12th ,, ...	1 Ngege
3rd ,, ...	1 Ngege	13th ,, ...	9 Ngege
4th ,, ...	1 Ngege	14th ,, ...	8 Ngege
5th ,, ...	1 Ngege	15th ,, ...	1 Ngege
6th ,, ...	1 Mbiru	16th ,, ...	8 Ngege
	1 Ningu	17th ,, ...	Empty
7th ,, ...	1 Ngege	18th ,, ...	2 Ngege
8th ,, ...	1 Sire		1 Mbiru
	8 Ngege	19th ,, ...	1 Ngege
9th ,, ...	1 Ngege	20th ,, ...	1 Ngege
10th ,, ...	2 Ngege		

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

inhabited Northern Unyoro (where a fragment of them remains), and that the Bahima and their Bantu subjects drove this branch of the Nilotic people across the Albert Nile to the north-west (where they remain as the Aluru) and into Busoga (across the Victoria Nile) on the south-east. From Busoga they appear to have been driven on by the Bantu right through the Kavirondo country until they finally settled and throve round the shores of Kavirondo Bay, where they at present bear the name of Ja-luo or Nyifwa. It is a remarkable fact that the Ja-luo to this day are

427. A RAFT MADE OF PAPYRUS BUNDLES, WHITE NILE

called by their Bantu neighbours "Abanyoro," which would indicate that this theory of their origin is correct.

The Ja-luo reside in fixed villages of from ten to fifty huts, which are surrounded by hedges of aloe and euphorbia. Formerly they built mud or stone walls round their settlements in imitation of the Bantu Kavirondo to the north. But this is a custom which has now died out. The houses are similar in appearance to those of the Bantu tribes around them, as is the arrangement about the two fireplaces. Young unmarried girls usually sleep together in one large hut under the care of an old woman. The young men and boys of the village also sleep by themselves, generally

14: Johnston G-4, 5 (no date) 1904 FL11 Luo FL11

strips makes this arrangement into a kind of pliable fence. This, by means of canoes, is brought round through the water back to the shore till it describes rather more than a semi-circle. The bringing round of the rope serves to chase all the fish that are between it and the shore towards the mouths of the big wickerwork traps which are placed in a row in the shallow water. The women, at the same time, walk up and down dragging traps of smaller mesh, in which they collect numbers of small fish. A good deal of fish-spearing takes place at night by torch-

435. JA-LUO OUT FISHING IN KAVIRONDO BAY WITH SCREENS OF PAPYRUS STALKS

light. The Ja-luo fishermen state that they get the best hauls of fish after a downpour of rain. *Rafts* of ambatch wood similar to those in use on the Nile are employed in laying out the nets. The Nyakach people of the south shore of Kavirondo Bay fish to a great extent with hook and line. The Ja-luo *canoes* are small dug-outs of poor appearance. Large quantities of fish are split and dried in the sun and sent inland to exchange for game.

Both sexes smoke and chew *tobacco*, but only old men smoke *hemp* through water-pipes. Boys and young men in the prime of life are not allowed to smoke hemp, as it is thought injurious to their manhood.